304 to look into the enclosure. If he should commit such an indiscretion which is considered a gross blunder, he at once suffers the consequences. He is immediately dragged into the circle undressed, and circumcised without any consultation with his relatives.

It is strictly forbidden to enter the kéogo, with néoda (shoes), a pougla [269] (red fez), and kandé (spears). If a canton chief should take it into his head to visit the circumcised boys -- an unlikely situation -- he would have to leave all his insignia of rank outside.

304 834 Since it has been observed that young men who have had sexual intercourse before their circumcision had difficulty in being healed after the operation, they are advised to avoid sexual intercourse for the first few months after the scars form.

304 262 They do not eat wagha sauce (a sauce made of the immature fruit of the wagka, a tree of the kapok family).

304 526 Required exercises for the bankoensé. The bankoensé are required to perform painful and tiring exercises, which considerably retards their recovery. We shall describe the principal ones below.

Very early in the morning when it is very cool -- we have pointed out that the ceremony takes place at the beginning of the cool season -- the boys are awakened and forced to lie prone on the cold sand without any covering. This is the bourga. Naturally enough, the limbs become a bit stiff, so they are roundly whipped with berrella (branches of certain trees), ostensibly to give them warmth and strength. Then, to the beat of the tom-toms, they must do the exercise called guella. This difficult feat involves jumping like a frog from a crouching position [270] and at intervals making a circular movement with the legs. They may also be required to do the even more difficult nagda, an exercise which involves walking on the hands with the legs in the air. Another exercise requires the boys, starting from an erect position, to bend backwards until the hands touch the ground. This is called kaougsèga, "back breaker." The unfortunates whose hands fail to reach the ground get a bump on the head. There are also movements of the head called zouanka, like those made by Kassonké girls and the Wiskamba of Mossi country.

527 victorious heroes that they were only mortals. The thought of death is wholesome and beneficial.

The "bean feast" is so named because on that day the naba eats bean sauce for the first time in the year.

The naba's hoeing ceremony (na-kobo) is celebrated twenty-one days after the previous one, and like it, like the naky, always on a Saturday. When the naba of Koupéla was solemnly invested by the naba of Bélousa, he used to go with a large number of horsemen and much pomp to hoe a field located some distance from Koupéla. Nowadays he merely breaks ground on a path which connects his huts with those of his two prime ministers. He gives the first blows with the [526] hoe to the sound of drums, and his men take up from there. If the Peul and the horsemen have come in sufficient numbers, they run [273] races. As is usual in such circumstances, beer flows freely, and at the end of the day everyone is drunk. These festivities bring the naba a few thousand cowries offered by his subjects.

There ceremonies, naky, nakobo, do they not constitute a sort of homage to agriculture, do they not recall similar festivities celebrated long ago by the Romans and even today by the Chinese?

443 The market which follows each of these feasts is always crowded. Several beeves and large numbers of sheep are killed. Everyone makes a point of attending in his very best clothes, and the sight of this motley crowd is quite interesting indeed.

Chapter 3. Magic

Mgr. Le Roy, as already mentioned, defines magic as "the art of coercing into one's service the forces of nature, or harnessing the powers of the invisible world, through certain occult practices of a more or less religious character." This is what we shall now study. To put some order into a subject which is wholly lacking in it in the mind of the native, we shall first discuss the superstitions, then the sorcerers.

[181] Like all primitive people, black or white, the Mossi are very superstitious. Were not our own ancestors, in the Middle Ages? Have superstitious beliefs, such as those concerning thirteen people at table,